







MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of Concordia University, it is my pleasure to extend best wishes on this 75th anniversary of the Association of Alumni of Sir George Williams University.

The evening courses and flexible approaches to higher education that were pioneered by Sir George Williams University in Montreal laid the foundations of what was to become a legacy of accessibility, diversity and achievement.

As Georgians, you embody the enduring values of your alma mater and the contributions made by generations of alumni dedicated to the wellbeing of society. At Concordia, we are fortunate to share a common purpose in protecting that legacy for the benefit of generations to come.

Congratulations on this diamond anniversary of your association and welcome home!

Alan Shepard

President and Vice-Chancellor

Concordia University

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Kudos on the 75th anniversary of Sir George Williams
University's first graduating class and the founding of the
Association of Alumni of Sir George Williams University.

Concordians are proud to be members of a family that includes pioneering Sir George Williams graduates.

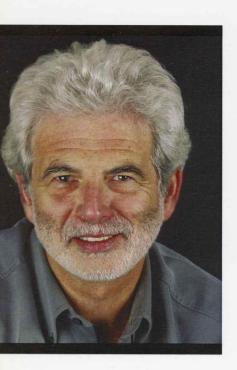
We are grateful to share the values of academic excellence, accessibility and community engagement that were Sir George Williams's hallmarks. You can rest assured that these principles continue to shape Concordia's philosophy and strengthen its foundations.

I would like to thank the organizers of this great event for sharing with all of us this opportunity to celebrate. On behalf of Concordia University and its 170,000 alumni, I extend my best wishes for a joyous and memorable celebration.

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Marie Claire Morin
Vice-President, Advancement and Alumni Relations
Concordia University





GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF ALUMNI OF SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

Dear fellow Georgians,

We who have all graduated from Sir George Williams University and who celebrate our 75th anniversary as alumi have many reasons to be proud.

Proud of our history.

Proud of our institution.

Proud of our individual accomplishments and our contribution to society as a whole.

Proud to look life in the face and say, "See what we did!"

But not alone. Without this great institution, we would all be only a fraction of what we have all come to be.

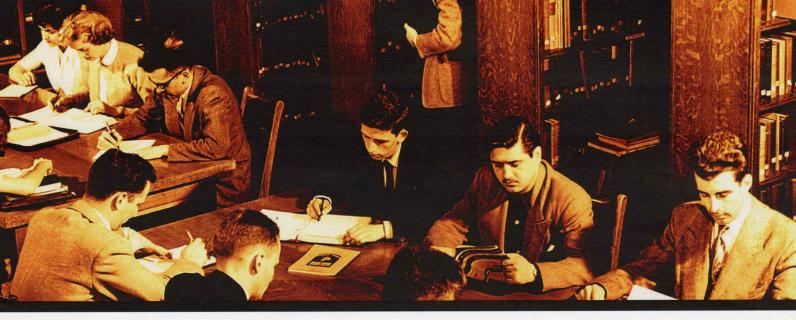
In the twilight of our years we must not forget what made us great.

Congratulations.

Mardy Weigensberg

President

Association of Alumni of Sir George Williams University



his celebration will be an opportunity to recount special anecdotes and to celebrate that special community spirit that so epitomized SGW College and subsequently SGW University." Canada's prime minister, Brian Mulroney, wrote these words in 1987 in light of the 50th anniversary of the first class to graduate from Sir George Williams University.

Twenty five years later, these sentiments hold true, and alumni will be able to mark the 75th anniversary of Sir George Williams's first graduating class as well as the Association of Alumni of Sir George Williams University (AASGWU) at a historic reunion as part of the President's Reunion Gala on September 29.

The diamond anniversary of Sir George Williams's original class is a good time to look back at the university's history and continuing legacy at Concordia.

Sir George Williams College (later University) was the first Canadian post-secondary institution to offer a full range of academic programs to evening students. From its inception, it was committed to the principle of "general education." Its roots date back to 1873 when the Montreal branch of the YMCA — the Young Men's Christian Association created by Sir George Williams in England in 1844 — inaugurated evening courses in vocational and general education. Originally called the Montreal YMCA Schools, it was re-christened Sir George Williams College in 1926 and began its four-year program in 1934.

The first Sir George Williams graduating class, affectionately known as the Guinea Pigs, received degrees in arts, science and commerce on June 3, 1937. The class had 11 students, including one woman, Rita Shane, BA 37. She later became a medical doctor and was the last surviving member of the Class of '37 before she passed away on July 6, 2012.

According to The Illustrated Companion History of Sir George Williams University (1977): "Sir George Williams started as a ramshackle, rambunctious, and lively kind of place where thousands and thousands came to get a 'collegucation,' where lesser numbers came to develop the basics of scholarship, but most of all a place where anyone could study and still earn a living at the same time."



Another member of the Guinea Pigs, former Sir George Williams professor and vice principal Douglass Burns Clarke, BA 37, LLD 73, remembered the early days in *Decades of Decisions* (1976): "The atmosphere at SGW was unforgettable for those who lived it. Everyone felt he was part of a common adventure in building up a new college with a distinctive and unique philosophy of education."

"Sir George had no money, rudimentary facilities and very little status," recalled former English professor Neil Compton in *The Illustrated Companion History of Sir George Williams University*. "However, the institution did have a heart; and the physical circumstances imposed intimacy between professor and students whether they wanted it or not." He added that fate "imposed upon us some of the virtues that students elsewhere would one day fight to regain."

The school continued to grow through the years; it officially obtained its university charter in 1948 (although it had been granting degrees since 1936-37) and in 1959 changed its name to Sir George Williams University. In 1968, in the wake of a royal commission on education, the Quebec government asked Loyola College and Sir George Williams to consider a union. The two institutions eventually agreed to merge into Concordia University in September 1974.

Sir George Williams left an indelible mark on its alumni, many of whom studied at night. "Pursuing formal courses at Sir George in the evening after a full day's work proved to be challenging," says Harvey Stoliar, BComm 62, an AASGWU board member and chair of its 75th Anniversary Planning Committee. But Stoliar, who is also a playwright and songwriter, adds, "I owe a debt of gratitude to Sir George for allowing me not only the opportunity to earn my commerce degree but to hone my musical skills and whet my appetite for entry into professional show business."

Continued legacy

Nearly 40 years later, Concordia continues to advance the Sir George Williams philosophy of serving student and community needs by promoting access to education through flexibility in its programs and admission.

Concordia's Sir George Williams Campus has been dramatically transformed in recent years with the addition of two striking new buildings, a statement of the university's ambitious goal to create the best possible learning and teaching environment. The Molson Building, home to the John Molson School of Business, houses the world's first solar wall, with the capacity to heat fresh air and thereby warm the building.

Sir George Williams played an important role in the economic, cultural and political reality of Montreal and Quebec. As Neil Compton wrote:

"Perhaps the two most exciting periods at the old Sir George were the late '30s and early '40s when this YMCA college admitted hundreds of able Jewish students who at that time were not accepted at McGill because of quota restrictions, and the late '40s and early '50s when the swell of veterans and immigrants filled the classrooms with mature students avid for knowledge."

Today, Concordia continues to make a major contribution to the local and provincial economic, cultural and social development. According to a study by consulting firm SECOR, the university generates nearly \$1.3 billion a year in economic spinoffs in Quebec by creating jobs and producing wealth.

Seventy-five years after Sir George Williams
University graduated its first class, its spirit lives
on at Concordia.





MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, 75TH ANNIVERSARY PLANNING COMMITTEE

It is only fitting that the 75th anniversary and celebration of the first graduating class of Sir George Williams University be respectfully dedicated to the following individuals whose recent passing is mourned by the entire Concordia University community.

John W. O'Brien, 1931-2012 Sir George Williams University's fifth principal, 1969-1973

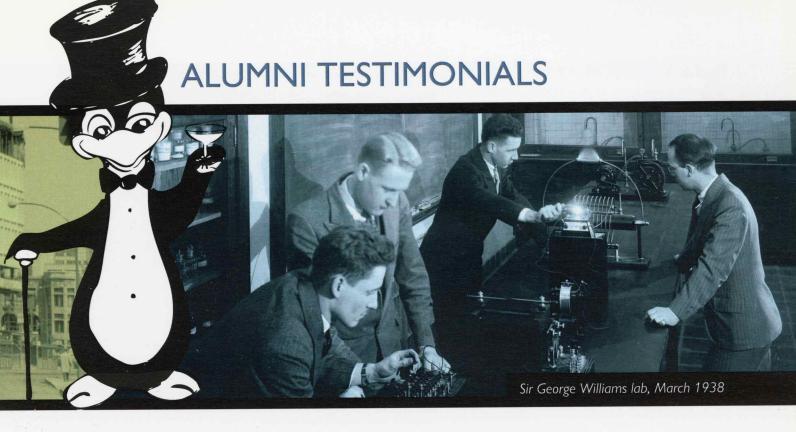
Rita Shane, BA 37, 1917-2012 First female graduate, Lifetime Board Member, Association of Alumni of Sir George Williams University

Robert W. Barnes, BA 68, 1942-2012 Past President, Association of Alumni of Sir George Williams University

Roland Picard, BSc 46, 1913-2012 Lifetime Board Member, Association of Alumni of Sir George Williams University

Harvey Stoliar, BComm 62 Chair, 75th Anniversary Planning Committee





Rita Shane, BA 37, 1917-2012: I was the first in my class to go to graduate school and for years the first to attend professional school. Sir George Williams University had faith in me and my ability to succeed afterwards in the top medical school in the country, and gave me a great recommendation for McGill. I in turn felt my performance as a student and graduate of the McGill Faculty of Medicine was very important to Sir George for it might affect the acceptance of future graduates.

I am proud of the evolution of Sir George Williams from college to university to its emergence as Concordia University. I had faith in the embryonic institution and it had faith in me. I think things turned out pretty well for both of us. I did not follow in the example of those students who take their degree and run. Although I have been very active in the McGill Alumni Society and in medical societies in Montreal, I have not neglected Sir George Williams. I have served as a director in the alumni association for many years and can always be counted on to support the university in any way I can.

Elizabeth Merson Ostro, BA 44: Thinking about and reaching into the past is to recount memorable fun-loving times. I appreciated studying at a university that was small and cohesive enough to be family and provide a unique learning experience, with students able to reach out, touch and be in touch with the educators. Sir George, I love you. I love its people.

Ken Adams, BSc 47 (1923-2003; Sir George Williams registrar, 1969-1974; Concordia registrar, 1974-1988): I have so many memories of Sir George Williams in its three forms, college, university and Concordia, that it is difficult to choose where to start. Here are a few funny incidents:

I remember the year an honorary degree candidate was presenting the convocation address. The speech was more a series of reminiscences. Unfortunately they seemed to be unending. The graduates and parents were getting restless and applauded at logical breaks, but to no avail. Finally, much to my great embarrassment, I was forced to rise and slowly walk to the speaker's side saying, "I am afraid the graduates are anxious to receive their diplomas." He stopped! It's funny now.

Another time an honorary degree candidate from California was giving the convocation address with full academic regalia, but — he was wearing running shoes.

Not to be outdone, we had a streaker! It was one of the first merged convocations in the sunshine on the Loyola Campus. Fortunately he was intercepted before he reached the stage.

Thomas F. Massiah, BSc 47: Henry F. Hall, Douglass B. Clarke, Olive Lead, Wynne Francis, Rachel Wasserman, Sam Madras, Winifred Bridges and Claude Thompson: What did these teachers have in common to justify my designating each of them as great? In a word, dedication. They believed that, despite the modest surroundings that comprised Sir George in those days, it was truly an institution dedicated to the development of individuals. The lessons they taught were lessons for life. As one who went through the process, I can report that you did a great job. We, your former students, look back with pride and thanks to have had you as our teachers.

Anne Adams, BSc 49, BA 50: As long as I can remember, Sir George has been a part of my life, beginning in 1940 when my sister [Kathryn Staniforth, BSc 45] entered as one of the first women in the science program. She graduated in 1945 with the science medal. I entered in the fall of 1945.

I can recall well my first day when my girlfriend and I arrived carrying our fruit basket with the required shoe polish, rags and brushes, wearing our little berry basket

hats — all part of freshman initiation. On the landing we met a senior [Ken Adams, BSc 47] who wanted his shoes polished, so we did as requested. Little did I know, at that time, that I would marry him in under 10 years.

For the first year I went to classes, went home, studied and took little part in student life. There were only about a dozen girls in the day division and there were hundreds of army vets. In my second year I discovered there was more to college life than classes. In fact, I failed a midterm in my second year and the professor took me out to lunch to explain that I received the failure to make me wake up and start to work. This I think is a good indication of the friendship and consideration between the faculty and students. I never failed a final or a midterm after that.

I ran in the student elections for the position of third-year rep on the Day Students' Undergraduate Society and won. I was very much involved in all aspects of student life in my third year I ran again and was elected secretary.





After I graduated with my BSc, I worked in the accounts office for Henry Worrall, the bursar, and attended classes in the evening. I switched to full-time study in January and graduated again the following June with a BA, major in fine arts. This was always my favourite field of study.

Any student who was in the college in those early years knew "The Trough," what we called the cafeteria in the basement of the Y, beside the billiard tables. Both students and faculty used to go down for coffee and had great discussions, with dozens of people around a table for four. One of the topics that I still remember that we discussed many times was "what is happiness?" The faculty often joined, but there was a great deal of respect for them by the students. In those days we were never on a first-name basis; they were "sir" at all times. I wish I could explain how much they meant to us in those undergraduate years.

After working part-time at Sir George, I eventually became full-time as assistant to the dean, Alf Pinsky, when the Faculty of Fine Arts was formed at Concordia in 1975. I worked there at a job I loved until retirement in 1991.

The university is so much a part of our family that now my two daughters, both graduates of the university (Kathryn-Ann Adams, BA 87, MBA 89, and Heather Adams-Robinette, BA 90, Cert 95), work there. You can tell that we are truly a Concordia (Sir George Williams) family!

Leonard R. Rosenberg, BComm 49: My memories of Sir George predate by far the university. I completed my high school studies before enlisting in the Canadian Active Army in the evening classes of Sir George Williams High School. On discharge from the army I enrolled in Sir George Williams College's commerce degree course, under the auspices of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

My memories of those days include Henry Hall, Kenneth Norris, the students, Mag Flynn, Rolie Picard and others. The memories further include the student newspaper, *The Georgian*, the Ski Club and the Georgian Inn in St. Sauveur, and many dances. After graduating I was involved with the AASGWU. All very good memories.

Thomas O. Hecht, BA 50: I am a child survivor of the Holocaust who was fortunate to have found a haven in Montreal during the Second World War. I entered Sir George in the YMCA building on Drummond St. in 1947 as a day student, and graduated with a BA, honours in political science. I had exceptional professors: D.B. Clarke and R. Wasserman in English, D.L. Thompson in the humanities, Henry Hall in the natural sciences, Winifred Bridges in psychology.

I was a member of the executive, as clubs' chairman, of the Students Undergraduate Society (SUS) in 1949-50 and prosecutor at the SUS's infamous Freshmen's Trials.

I worked closely with political science professor Herb Quinn — expert and author on the Quebec Duplessis era — and after finishing my graduate work at McGill and European universities I lectured at Sir George from 1954 to 1963 in political science. I loved my student days at Sir George, including the second-floor landing of the Y building, with its two important non-academic annexes, the Stanley Tavern and the bar at the Berkley Hotel (the "B") on Sherbrooke St. I also attended genuine classes in the Stanley St. Annex, which had been originally the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue.

My period at Sir George was also significantly enhanced by the presence of Second World War veterans who helped provide a more mature environment for us recent high school graduates.

While being a part-time lecturer at Sir George, I entered the family pharmaceutical manufacturing business and subsequently became chairman and CEO of the publicly traded Continental Pharma Cryosan Inc., an international healthcare company headquartered in Montreal.



My activities in the public sector involved community activism in the Montreal Jewish community and on several boards. I am happily married in Montreal with three children and two grandchildren while continuing to pursue my business career and lecturing. I also had my memoirs, Czech Mate – A Life in Progress, published by Yad Vashem (the Holocaust Memorial Authority in Jerusalem) in 2009, co-written with renowned journalist Joe King.

My days at Sir George will always remain a highlight in my life, assisting me to become a responsible adult linked to a deep attachment to the values of an education.

Dudley C. Tucker, BSc 53: My time at Sir George was a happy event. My emphasis was on obtaining a four-year degree to obtain a suitable job in the technical field of telecommunications. I achieved my goal and I went for further training after graduation. I was an army veteran and could not lose any time upon graduation. The instruction I received was excellent. My advancement depended on it.

F. Gordon Clark, BComm 55: The Sir George of the early 1950s was vastly different from what exists today at Concordia. The differences were both in the physical plant and in the course structure, which, in those days, was designed for a small daytime student body with a large evening division.

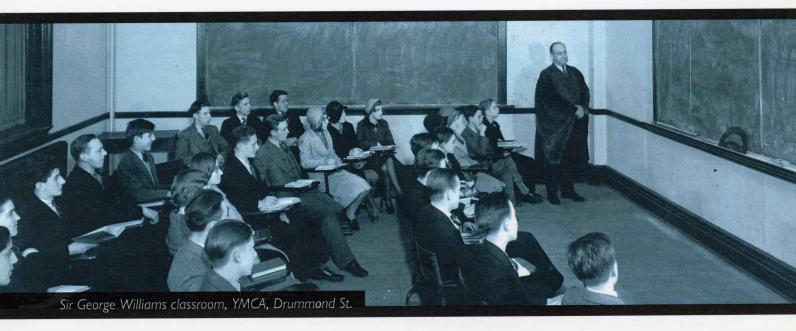
Raphael Fleming, BComm 56: I was 22 and started working for my dad. He was in the loan and mortgage business and I was verifying valuation of properties. We were also involved in real estate and hospitality. In 1958, we built a small hotel on the corner of Dorchester and Mackay.

We also opened a restaurant, La Regence. It was huge success from the beginning, being right across the CBC. At that time, Montreal had the finest restaurants: Club 400, Chez Ernest, Desjardins, Drury's, Chez Stein, Café Martin, Mother Martin's, Dinty Moore's and Moishe's — they're all gone except Moishe's.

I continued in real estate and opened a restaurant, Le Vert Galant, on Crescent St. in 1972. It was actually the same time as Les Halles and Thursday's opened.

I'm now a consultant in the hospitality business and in my spare time I volunteer in many areas and am a bridge player, with my wife.

I graduated from Sir George Williams with a special distinction in purchasing, which helped me greatly in my career.



Myer Horowitz, BA 56, LLD 82: I have a number of very positive recollections of my time at Sir George (1952-1956). The one that comes immediately to mind has to do with one of the courses I took in the second term of my first year, between January and May of 1953. It was on the "Appreciation of Poetry" and offered by Irving Layton. There were only about 10 of us in the course. What an experience it was to learn from a creative literary figure. At one point he complained that the schools were at fault for the minimal understanding most of us have of poetry. Perhaps children would have a better appreciation of poetry, he suggested, if they were encouraged to write poetry. My recollection is of a very humane and caring individual who, unknown to him, became a major influence in my teaching.

Demetrius "Jimmy" Manolakos, BA 56: I shall always be indebted to the institution that Sir George was, not only for what was given to me and for the many friends I made there, but for a philosophy of life that has served me well over the years. I consider my election as President of the Class of '56 among my better achievements, and the SUS Major Award my biggest award.

Don Isidore Albin, BA 57: Students today speak of their right to an education — and I agree. But then, upon reflection, for a lot of us it was a true privilege to attend Sir George Williams. I was able to remain in Montreal, eventually marry my teenage sweetheart, start a family. Our second child, Joel, was a toddler when I received my BA, with my sister and my wife in the audience.

My Sir George Williams diploma is a gift, the degree of Bachelor of Arts a distinct honour for me.

Jerome J. Beamish, BA 57: My education was interrupted by the Second World War and service in the Royal Air Force and Royal Canadian Air Force from 1941 to 1946. Upon my discharge, I had already married the love of my life (now 67 years) and we were planning a family. As a result, it was necessary for me to seek full-time employment immediately and saw no possibility of attending university.

In 1953, I was made aware of Sir George Williams and its evening program. I registered as a Senior Matriculation Student (Evening) that spring.

During the next four years I attended evening classes year-round while working full-time during the day, completing my BA in 1957.

If Sir George had not existed or had not been willing to give me an opportunity to pursue my degree at night, a university education would have been only a dream for me.

I majored in psychology and was interested in pursuing advanced degrees in the subject, so I applied for graduate work to Columbia University, where I received master's and doctoral degrees. My next 30-plus years were spent with the California University System and Department of Mental Hygiene. I retired from the system as Student Services Professional III Emeritus and Assistant Professor of Psychology in 1990.

All this because of the opportunity offered by Sir George. I shall forever be thankful!

Harvey Stoliar, BComm 62: To borrow a phrase from Mr. Dickens, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times."

It was late summer of 1956 when a young "wet-behind-the-ears" teenager fresh out of Baron Byng High School registered in Birks Hall as a Sir George Williams College undergraduate commerce student.

Entertaining any thoughts of ever being welcomed as a full-time day student were quickly shattered when I found myself obliged to join the workforce to help augment our family income.

My dad, Robert, who came to Canada as a young Russian immigrant, laboured diligently in the needle trade to provide for his three children and his young devoted Montreal wife, Sadie.

However, by the late 1950s, his failing health was accelerated by complications from diabetes and arterial sclerosis and resulted in a double leg amputation. It was stressful and painful to witness this courageous man struggle to master the skills of learning to walk again with the aid of crutches while placing both stumps into the sockets of cumbersome artificial limbs.

My entry into the corporate world began July 1956 as an accounts payable clerk at Steinberg's head office. Pursuing formal courses of study at Sir George in the evening after a full day's work proved to be overwhelming and challenging. My days and nights were comprised of attending classes at Sir George, reconciling Steinberg's \$4 million monthly grocery accounts payable during the day, and dutifully finding moments to make regular hospital visits to see dad.

Academic success did not come easy. Final grades of Cs or Ds were not uncommon. I even told my mother on several occasions that the final mark F is equivalent to winning Olympic gold: F is for "Fabulous!" (To this day I'm uncertain if she ever believed me.)

In retrospect, how many students have the chance to acquire work skills during the day, obtain university credits for courses completed at night, and upon successful completion of these courses be totally reimbursed by their employer? Thank you Sir George, thank you Steinberg's!

However, after several years behind the desk, it was becoming evident that my motivation to succeed as a four-star corporate general was waning. I did have one trump card up my sleeve. From my early elementary school days and throughout high school, I earned the reputation of

being musically inclined. I was permanently smitten by music and everything it had to offer. Tunes and original melody patterns were running through my head. At Steinberg's, I involuntarily found myself multitasking: scribbling song lyrics on a legal pad resting on my desk while simultaneously auditing a \$13,000 invoice from Heinz Foods.

My enthusiasm for creating new musical ideas and harmonies blossomed at Sir George thanks to my dear friend and late partner, Ben Kaye. Without any financial backing or sponsors, Ben and I became showbiz entrepreneurs and penned songs for numerous artists. We discovered, wrote songs for and promoted Les Classels, whose popularity in the French Canadian market extended for several years until the late 1960s.

Having married and become a proud daddy of twin daughters, I made an executive decision to "cash in" my Class I Teacher's Diploma from Macdonald College and seek my fortune in public education. I "officially retired" in 1997 but I still enjoy the rapport with students and welcome the opportunity to do supply teaching.

During the past several years, I collaborated with Don Habib on an original musical comedy titled Class Reunion, inspired to a large extent by my wonderful years at Sir George Williams University.

Carole Charnutzky, BA 63: In 1954, Father would not accept that a woman should attend university. At 15 I joined the Royal Canadian Navy Reserve – Medical Branch, earning enough in five years to cover some of my costs and keep my dreams of obtaining a degree. Sir George Williams then confirmed my admission to second-year science, followed by McGill University for third and fourth years in chemistry and biochemistry. Soon after, I completed a BA in psychology while working because Sir George Williams offered evening courses.

In 1966 I joined Expo 67 in Visitors' Services and later became assistant manager. I then joined *The Gazette* and CJAD in charge of "Operation Crimecheck." Later I became manager of the Canada Symphony Orchestra, for young university music students. By 1975 I joined the Montreal Olympics to train hosts and hostesses for the 23 venues. The following spring I volunteered for the Canada Games in LaSalle, where I lived. In the early '80s I joined the British Commonwealth Games Association for the staging in Brisbane, Australia, as assistant manager of Team Canada.

Shortly after the Olympics, I started to learn to play badminton and now compete at the regional, provincial and world levels. In 2013 I hope to join my peers for the Masters Olympics in Torino, Italy.

It has been an eventful and memorable career. Thank you Sir George Williams! Thank you Concordia! I owe you so much.

Robert W. "Bob" Barnes, BA 68 (1942-2102): I enrolled in commerce at Sir George in fall 1965. My goal was to get an undergraduate degree to get a job.

In my second year, I ran for external vice-president of the SUS. There were four candidates for the position. Alex Savoyan, BA 67, beat me by 14 votes. I was not happy. Somebody told me we could get the election invalidated according to the constitution because the election was based on the plurality system. So I lodged a complaint with the chief returning officer, who declared that a new election would have to be held. All hell broke out. The council eventually decided to overrule the constitution because there was no time left before year end.

Carnival time was always a blast up on the ski hills. In my second year I was approached by a group of ex-NDG Maple Leaf football players to keep a little discipline at the ski hill during carnival. Being a former player, I jumped at the chance (free beer and our own room) courtesy of Magnus Flynn.

With the opening of the Hall Building in 1966, we thought we had all died and gone to heaven. Mag Flynn approached me about creating the Student Control Committee. The university was now big, and there was no formal security except for Reggie and his gang of floor walkers, as they were called. The committee was empowered to have anyone identify themselves on campus and trained to evacuate the Hall Building. Students knew us because we were outfitted with bright gold cardigans with maroon arm bands.

I recruited 30 students for the committee, all over 200 pounds. Mag Flynn would treat us twice a year to a nice lunch in the faculty club and the odd round of beer at the Stanley Tavern. Beer was cheap: two draughts for 25 cents — that included a 5-cent tip. We had a great time together.

I graduated in with a BA degree because I needed fewer credits to finish, so I transferred from commerce to arts. The move turned out to be fantastic. My requirements were all 100-level electives — what a blast!

Leonard Wolman, BComm 68: In September 1965, on the very first day of Freshmen week, I was recruiting reporters for *The Georgian*. I asked for the name and telephone number of a young lady — age 16 — who was applying for a job. Her name was Mona Melamed, BA 70, and I asked her on a date that night. We married the day after I wrote my last exam for my BComm, on April 28, 1968. We are happily married with three children and six grandchildren. Our eldest son, Dov Wolman, BComm 93, is a Concordia graduate and a CA as well, and a partner with me in Perreault, Wolman, Grzywacz & Co., a major accounting firm with more than 50 members in Montreal. We thank Sir George for a wonderful educational experience and fondly remember our time almost 50 years ago.

Heather (Webb) Allen, BA 75: Thank you Sir George for giving me a chance and a start in my post-secondary education. Among the many professors who gave me an appreciation for higher education, I particularly remember J. Laffey, J. Goldern, S. Paikowsky, B. McDonald and R. Kass. They were stimulating and unforgettable educators dedicated to the task of teaching a motley group of undergraduates to question, appreciate, substantiate and, above all, to footnote.

